

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2022

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With President Abdelfattah Said Elsisí of Egypt in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt
November 11, 2022

President Elsisí. Your Excellency, Mr. President, you are most welcome to the city of Sharm El-Sheikh. I do welcome your—[*inaudible*—]delegation as well. This is a great opportunity. And this year, we mark 100 years of—celebrating 100 years of U.S.-Egyptian relationships.

Allow me to say, sir, that this is a great opportunity as we know are now celebrating our 100th anniversary of the Egyptian-U.S. relationship.

And Your Excellency's visit to Sharm El-Sheikh is a real reflection of the strength of the relationship and will be a great momentum to this COP27.

This is also a great opportunity that we can boost the strategic relationship between our two countries. Yesterday I had a great opportunity of meeting Madam Speaker Honorable Nancy Pelosi and several Members of the U.S. Congress. We talked about multiple issues. And it was a great event as well.

I would like to seize this opportunity of having U.S. media with us to talk about the overall issues in the Middle East and how things are unfolding in this region. First of all, I'd like to emphasize the strength of the strategic relationship between Egypt and the United States that has not changed over 40 years. There has always been common understanding regarding all the issues relating to this region.

But there's always a point that is the center of the debate, that we appreciate very much, and this is the human rights part. In this particular regard, we have a comprehensive approach that I'd like you to listen and hear from us about it and to follow it up, because we are very keen on improving this file.

We have launched a national strategy for human rights. Then we launched another initiative for national dialogue in April of this year. This was—coincided with a committee for Presidential amnesty. This is following up all of the relevant issues, and all the lists that are suggested are being approved.

And I don't feel that this will be very much appropriate to take all the time speaking while Your Excellency is here, but I just wanted to address in general the topics that are of common interest to us.

Your Excellency, I welcome you.

President Biden. I can listen to you much longer, Mr. President. [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, President Elsisí spoke briefly in English as follows.*]

President Elsisí. I appreciate that.

President Biden. No, I'm serious.

President Elsisí. I appreciate that. Thank you.

President Biden. First of all, thank you for hosting the COP27 meeting. The—you know, Egypt has long—been long called the "Mother of the World"—[*laughter*—]so it seems appropriate that you're hosting this environmental effort.

And thank you for, you know, reminding us the urgency of this crisis. It is an urgent crisis, and we all have to do considerably more.

President Elsisì. Yes.

President Biden. And that's why we sent our best, Secretary Kerry, who's forgotten more about the environment and what we need to do than most people know.

And Egypt has been, by the way, a key mediator. I appreciate what we were able to do with regard to Gaza and the strong counterterrorism partnership that we've established. In the face of Russia's war in Ukraine, Egypt has spoken up strongly at the United Nations, and that is appreciated very much as well.

Today we're also going to discuss a full range of bilateral issues, some of which you referenced, and—to preserving our strong defense partnership, to pursuing a more integrated Middle East, and continuing our dialogue on human rights. And I'm glad to hear your commission.

And I look forward to our conversation. You know, as we were saying walking down the hall, it's hard to believe, but it's been a hundred years since there's been this strong relationship.

President Elsisì. Yes.

President Biden. So I hope by the end of the commemoration of this year, we can even say we're closer and stronger in every way.

President Elsisì. Yes.

President Biden. Thank you for having me.

President Elsisì. Pleasure. Pleasure.

[An interpreter translated President Biden's above remarks into Arabic, following which several reporters began asking questions as the press was escorted out.]

Q. President Biden—[inaudible].

Q. Will you raise human rights issues in your meeting?

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 3:55 p.m. at the Tonino Lamborghini International Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John F. Kerry. President Elsisì spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Categories: Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Egypt, President Elsisì.

Locations: Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt.

Names: Elsisì, Abdelfattah Said; Kerry, John F.

Subjects: Egypt, counterterrorism cooperation with U.S.; Egypt, human rights issues; Egypt, President; Egypt, President Biden's visit; Egypt, relations with U.S.; Egypt, U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change 27th Conference of Parties in Sharm El-Sheikh; Gaza, conflict with Israel; Middle East, regional integration efforts; Russia, conflict in Ukraine; Special Presidential Envoy on Climate; Ukraine, Russian invasion and airstrikes; United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

DCPD Number: DCPD202201032.